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ACTION DRL-02

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	DODE-00
	PERC-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EAP-00	EB-00	FBIE-00	VC-00
	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	LAB-01	L-00	VCE-00
	MOFM-05	MOF-01	AC-01	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01
	OPIC-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00
	SSO-00	SS-00	STR-00	TRSE-00	T-00	USIE-00	R-00
	IIP-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-00	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00
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FM AMEMBASSY HANOI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8328  
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 HANOI 002956

SIPDIS

STATE FOR DRL AND EAP/BCLTV

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/19/12

TAGS: PHUM PREL KPAQ VM UNHRC HUMANR

SUBJECT: UN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION PROFILES-VIETNAM

REF: A. STATE 252917 B. HANOI 2612

- C. HANOI 2621 D. HANOI 2823

**11.** (U) CLASSIFIED BY AMBASSADOR RAYMOND BURGHARDT,

REASON: 1.5 (D)

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**12.** (C) AS FAR AS EMBASSY CAN ASCERTAIN FROM THIS DISTANCE, VIETNAM IS AT BEST A MARGINAL PLAYER ON THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION, AND AT TIMES IS ACTIVELY OPPOSED TO US VALUES AND VIEWS. VIETNAM LIKELY SOUGHT A SEAT ON THE COMMISSION PRIMARILY AS A MEANS OF ENHANCING ITS INTERNATIONAL STATURE, A PROCESS TOWARD WHICH IT HAS WORKED ASSIDUOUSLY AND SUCCESSFULLY OVER THE PAST DECADE. THE OTHER PART OF THE GVN'S CALCULUS WAS PROBABLY TO BE WELL-PLACED TO PROTECT ITS OWN INTERESTS -- AND THOSE OF "TRADITIONAL FRIENDS" LIKE LIBYA, IRAN, AND IRAQ -- AGAINST WHAT IT CLAIMS IS THE EROSION OF INTERNATIONAL PRINCIPLES RESPECTING NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY AND NON-INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS. EMBASSY IS NOT OPTIMISTIC THAT THE USG CAN CHANGE VIETNAM'S VIEWS OR PARTICIPATION IN ANY MEANINGFUL MANNER. (SEE REF B FOR A DISCUSSION ON VIETNAM'S TAKE ON HUMAN RIGHTS, AND REF C FOR ITS OVERALL WORLDVIEW.)

**13.** (C) COUNTRY PROFILE:

**1A.** THE MFA DETERMINES VIETNAM'S VOTES IN INTERNATIONAL FORA, FOLLOWING OVERALL POLICY GUIDELINES SET DOWN BY THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF VIETNAM (CPV). A CPV "CELL" OVERSEEING BOTH THE MFA AND THE CPV'S COMMISSION ON EXTERNAL RELATIONS PROBABLY MAKES KEY DECISIONS, APART FROM EXTREMELY SENSITIVE ONES THAT NEED TO BE PRESENTED TO THE CPV POLITBURO. FEW, IF ANY, DECISIONS REGARDING THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION ARE LIKELY VETTED AT THE POLITBURO LEVEL. THE GVN REPRESENTATIVE IN GENEVA IS PROBABLY ON A FAIRLY SHORT LEASE, WHILE THE AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON ALMOST CERTAINLY PLAYS NO ROLE

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WHATSOEVER. VIETNAM WILL NONTHELESS LISTEN ATTENTIVELY TO THE VIEWS OF THE G-77 AND ASEAN ON MAJOR ISSUES, AND LIKES WHENEVER POSSIBLE TO VOTE WITH THE MAJORITY.

**1B.** THE TOP MFA CONTACT IS FOREIGN MINISTER NGUYEN DY NIEN, WHO SPEAKS GOOD ENGLISH (ALTHOUGH HE OFTEN PREFERENCES TO USE AN INTERPRETER). HIS OFFICE TELEPHONE IS 84-4-199-2218 OR 84-9-13238218 DURING WORKING HOURS (12 HOURS DIFFERENCE FROM WASHINGTON), OR 84-4-845-2980 (NON-WORKING HOURS). THERE IS NO POINT IN TRYING TO CONTACT CPV OFFICIALS DIRECTLY; THEY CLAIM THEIR ROLE IS PARTY-TO-PARTY RELATIONS.

**1C.** THE GVN IN GENERAL DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS SHOULD INVOKE SANCTIONS OR SINGLE OUT PARTICULAR COUNTRIES (APART FROM THE U.S. OR ISRAEL) FOR CRITICISM. SENSITIVE TO INTERNATIONAL CRITICISM ON ITS OWN HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD, VIETNAM WILL SEEK TO ENSURE THAT THE COMMISSION SPENDS AS LITTLE

TIME AS POSSIBLE EXAMINING INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES. ITS REPRESENTATIVE IN GENEVA WILL GENERALLY DISCOURAGE FORMAL CONDEMNATIONS OF SPECIFIC COUNTRIES -- UNLESS THERE IS A CLEAR CONSENSUS AMONG THE G-77 OR OTHER MAJOR GROUPING OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. EMBASSY DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT THE GVN HAS A SPECIFIC AGENDA OF ITS OWN TO ADVANCE WITHIN THE COMMISSION, AND EXPECTS IT WILL BE A FOLLOWER, NOT A LEADER, IN ITS DELIBERATIONS.

**1D.** A TOP GVN PRIORITY OVER THE COMING DECADE IN THE INTERNATIONAL AREA IS TO WIN A UN SECURITY COUNCIL  
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SEAT FOR 2008. IT HAS ALREADY BEGUN ITS CAMPAIGN, QUIETLY LOBBYING A VARIETY OF NATIONS, INCLUDING THE U.S. (REF D). ASEAN ENDORSED THIS CANDIDACY IN ITS ANNUAL MEETING IN 2002. THE USG CAN PLAY THIS CARD, CITING RESPONSIBLE AND PRODUCTIVE BEHAVIOR WITHIN THE COMMISSION AS ONE CRITERION THE USG WILL CONSIDER WHEN MAKING ITS DECISION ON A UNSC SEAT. THE USG AID PROGRAM FOR VIETNAM IS EXCLUSIVELY HUMANITARIAN AND TRADE-RELATED, AND SO DOES NOT LEND ITSELF TO LEVERAGE RELATED TO COMMISSION ACTIVITIES OR HUMAN RIGHTS BEHAVIOR.

**1E.** THE MFA HAS ALREADY INDICATED THAT IT WISHES TO PICK UP THE PACE OF BILATERAL DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGES OVER THE NEXT YEAR, INCLUDING POSSIBLE VISITS TO THE US BY: MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENSE TRA (FEBRUARY/MARCH); DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER KHOAN (MARCH/APRIL); FOREIGN MINISTER NIEN (JUNE); AND PRIME MINISTER KHAI (NOVEMBER/DECEMBER). THEY WOULD WELCOME VISITS TO VIETNAM IN 2003 OF USTR ZOELLICK (MARCH); DEPUTY SECRETARY ARMITAGE (JUNE); AND SECRETARY POWELL

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(JUNE/JULY). IN ADDITION, THE SECRETARY WILL MEET WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER AT THE ASEAN POST-MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE AND ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM IN PHNOM PENH IN MID-JUNE, WHILE THE PRESIDENT SHOULD AGAIN BE SEATED NEXT TO PRIME MINISTER KHAI AT THE APEC SUMMIT NEXT

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	STR-00	TRSE-00	T-00	USIE-00	R-00	ECA-00	IIP-00
	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-00	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/015W

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FM AMEMBASSY HANOI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8329  
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 HANOI 002956

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YEAR. ALL OF THESE VISITS WOULD GIVE US A GOOD FACE-TO-FACE OPPORTUNITY TO LOBBY OUR OWN CANDIDACY FOR THE COMMISSION AS WELL AS FOR OUR AGENDA.

**1F.** VIETNAM'S GOVERNMENT- AND PARTY-CONTROLLED MEDIA OFFER NO OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEDIA OUTREACH. THERE ARE  
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NO DOMESTIC NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (ONLY CPV-CONTROLLED "MASS ORGANIZATIONS"). FOREIGN NGOS, WHICH ARE MOSTLY INVOLVED IN HUMANITARIAN PROJECTS, ARE GENERALLY LOATH TO GET INVOLVED IN HUMAN RIGHTS-RELATED ISSUES, AND VOICED OPPOSITION IN 2001 (SOME AT THE GVN BEHEST) TO THE DRAFT VIETNAM HUMAN RIGHTS ACT PASSED BY THE US HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. VISITS TO VIETNAM BY US EXPERTS (BOTH ACADEMICS AND ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS) ON THE UN SYSTEM AND ON HUMAN RIGHTS OFFER THE BEST LONG-TERM HOPE FOR INFLUENCING OPINIONS AT LEAST OF ELITE GROUPS, BUT PROVIDE LIMITED VALUE IN ACHIEVING USG GOALS FOR THE CHR-59.

BURGHARDT

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